

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY EA/PRCM:DANDERSON  
APPROVED BY IO:CWMAYNES  
IO/UNP:PSBRIDGES  
EA:RBOAKLEY  
S/S LFLEISCHER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE  
INFO USLO PEKING PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY  
USINT HAVANA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 216155

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PORG, PEPR, CH, CU

SUBJECT:DEMARCHE TO PRC ON PUERTO RICO

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY MAYNES CALLED IN AMBASSADOR HAN HSU, PRCLO DEPUTY CHIEF, AUGUST 24 TO DISCUSS THE FORTHCOMING COMMITTEE OF 24 DISCUSSION OF PUERTO RICO. MAYNES NOTED THAT THIS ISSUE IS OF INTEREST TO THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE US GOVERNMENT, MOST PARTICULARLY THE PRESIDENT, WHO ON JULY 25 ISSUED A PROCLAMATION ON THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF PUERTO RICO'S ASSOCIATION WITH THE US (A COPY OF THE PROCLAMATION WAS GIVEN HAN). MAYNES EMPHASIZED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD MADE CLEAR THAT WE  
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SUPPORT SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO AND WILL SUPPORT WHATEVER FORM OF GOVERNMENT THEY MIGHT CHOOSE -- INDEPENDENCE, STATEHOOD, OR COMMONWEALTH. HE CONTINUED THAT THE US UNDERSTOOD THE CHINESE POSITION AS EARLIER STATED IN THE COMMITTEE OF 24, AND WE WOULD NOT EXPECT THE PRC TO CHANGE A POSITION OF PRINCIPLE. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION,

WITH ITS EMPHASIS ON FREEDOM OF CHOICE FOR PUERTO RICO,  
IS CONSISTENT WITH THE CHINESE POSITION.

2. MAYNES SAID THAT THE PROCESS IS ALREADY UNDERWAY FOR

ANOTHER REFERENDUM IN 1980 TO DETERMINE THE PREFERENCE  
OF THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE, ADDING THAT THEY HAD VOTED  
OVERWHELMINGLY FOR COMMONWEALTH STATUS IN THE 1967  
REFERENDUM. THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES WILL  
SET THE TERMS OF THE REFERENDUM. WE WOULD NOT OBJECT  
SHOULD THE PUERTO RICANS REQUEST OBSERVERS FROM THE  
UNITED NATIONS, OAS OR OTHER BODIES.

3. MAYNES CONTINUED THAT, AS WAS THE CASE AT THE NON-  
ALIGNED CONFERENCE IN BELGRADE, CUBA WILL MAKE AN  
INTERVENTIONIST ATTEMPT IN THE COMMITTEE OF 24 TO TAKE  
ACTION HOSTILE TO THE US AND DETRIMENTAL TO THE RIGHT  
OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE.  
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OAKLEY (EA) INTERJECTED  
THAT THIS WAS A VERY IMPORTANT POINT. HE ADDED THAT  
THE CUBANS, IN EFFECT, WERE SAYING THAT THE COMMITTEE  
OF 24 SHOULD TELL THE PUERTO RICANS WHAT THEY WANT  
RATHER THAN LETTING THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE DETERMINE  
THEIR FUTURE FOR THEMSELVES.

4. MAYNES CONCLUDED HIS PRESENTATION WITH A REQUEST  
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THAT THE PRC SUPPORT A PROCEDURAL EFFORT TO BLOCK THE  
CUBAN INTERVENTIONIST ATTEMPT AND PROTECT THE RIGHT OF  
THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

5. HAN RESPONDED BY NOTING THAT THE US HAD INDICATED  
IT WAS AWARE OF THE CHINESE POSITION. CLEARLY  
UNPREPARED TO RESPOND FURTHER, HAN STATED HE WAS NOT  
CLEAR ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THE SITUATION AND RESERVED  
THE RIGHT TO PROVIDE AN ANSWER AT A LATER DATE. HE  
NOTED THAT THESE MATTERS WERE PRIMARILY HANDLED IN THE  
UNITED NATIONS AND THE COMMITTEE OF 24, BUT SAID THAT  
HE WOULD REPORT TO PEKING AND IF THERE WAS A REPLY, HE  
WOULD CONTACT MAYNES.

6. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THIS MATTER IS PRIMARILY  
A SUBJECT TO BE HANDLED IN THE UNITED NATIONS FRAME-  
WORK, OAKLEY POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS ALSO A PROBLEM  
INVOLVING CUBA'S WORLD-WIDE EFFORT TO MAKE THE NON-  
ALIGNED MOVEMENT ALIGNED. HAN REPLIED THAT THE US MUST  
BE WELL AWARE OF CHINA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD CUBA, AND THAT  
THE PRC REGARDS CUBA AS AN INSTRUMENT OF THE SOVIET  
UNION. HE SAID HE HAD FOUND THAT MANY COUNTRIES AT THE

NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE WERE WELL AWARE OF CUBA'S ROLE.

7. MAYNES ADDED THAT THE PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION HAS MADE CLEAR THAT PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE IS NOT AN ISSUE. PUERTO RICO HAS THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION, BUT CUBA IS IN EFFECT TRYING TO INTERFERE WITH THAT RIGHT. THE U.S. HOPES THAT PRC WILL SUPPORT A PROCEDURAL APPROACH WHICH WILL ENABLE US TO THWART CUBAN PLANS. OAKLEY NOTED THAT WE WILL ALSO BE DISCUSSING THIS ISSUE WITH PRC REPRESENTATIVES IN NEW YORK BUT ADDED THAT WE WANTED TO PUT IT IN THE BROADER CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM HAN HSU HIMSELF HAD IDENTIFIED, THAT OF CUBAN EFFORTS TO DISTORT THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. HAN CONCLUDED THE MEETING BY REITERATING THAT CHINA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD CUBA IS WELL-KNOWN TO CONFIDENTIAL

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THE WHOLE WORLD. CHRISTOPHER

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